

*The Budget—Mr. Colin Cameron*

political commentators. I may say I had some grave misgivings as to the wisdom of the establishment of the state of Israel, and in the light of events since perhaps those misgivings were not ill-founded. Nevertheless, I knew deep down in my heart that had I been a Jew 20 years ago I would have been in their ranks. I would have said to myself, after all these years, after all these centuries during which my people have been persecuted, humiliated and degraded, by God, the time has come when I am going to develop some place on this globe where I and my children can stand on our feet with dignity as befits human beings. Yes, I am quite sure that is the way I would have thought and acted.

Now we come to the ultimate tragedy of the Jewish people and the Jewish situation, and that is the price which had to be paid for the establishment of the state of Israel. There is always a price to be paid for anything achieved in this world, and all too often the bill is presented to the wrong people. When Israel was established as a direct result of endless years of persecution, humiliation and discrimination, at which all too many in the so-called Christian world blinked their eyes, the bill was presented not to the persecutors, not to the people who tolerated these unseemly and violent conditions, but to the other people, also Semitic, who also have been persecuted by our so-called western civilization.

**An hon. Member:** Turkey.

**Mr. Cameron (Nanaimo-Cowichan-The Islands):** The hon. member suggests it was Turkey, and he is quite right. We did very little about Turkey, and after that every European nation almost without fail moved in on the Arab peoples. Then, just after they had struggled out of the suffocating and degrading clutch of European colonialism we said to the Arabs, move over and make room for the victims of our bigotry, our cruelty, our colonialism and our cynicism.

While undoubtedly there were many Arabs who left voluntarily and while undoubtedly many of them may have been urged to do so, others nevertheless—this is an undeniable fact—were driven out of the country under conditions of savage brutality. Today they remain rotting away in full sight of the lands from which they were expelled or fled.

We are now told that it is part of Arab strategy to keep them there, and this may be so. Certainly as long as they are there they tend to keep the flames of Arab resentment burning high. I have to ask myself this question: What else could the Arab peoples do

with them? These are poverty-stricken countries in the main, ill developed and with problems of their own. Can they be asked to absorb a million refugees? What would Canada do if we were suddenly asked tomorrow morning to admit a million Negro refugees from the southern states or a million people from the slums of London, Manchester or Liverpool? You and I know what we would do. We would say we could not do it, that it was impossible. Yet Canada is a fairly wealthy country and fairly well developed. We would do almost nothing. I might say that when we did have an opportunity to offer asylum to Jewish people fleeing from persecution we turned them from our doors.

Part of the tragedy of the human condition is that we can never go back and undo the crimes and follies of yesterday. We have to go on from where we are. I think in this regard, at a time when President Nasser's name is anathema in the ears of many people of the western world, a time when many papers have insulting cartoons of him appearing almost daily, I should put on record some references to correspondence I had with President Nasser of the U.A.R. after I had returned from Egypt and Israel.

I wrote President Nasser to tell him of my profound depression at the conditions I found in the Middle East, and about two peoples who so badly need each other wasting their resources on military solutions to their problems. I wrote very frankly to him. I told him that as an old man I knew the time comes in life when you have to accept facts, however unpalatable, and that the state of Israel is now a fact. I asked him whether he would not be better advised to move on from that point and seek an accommodation with the people of Israel.

It was probably an impertinence on the part of an insignificant member of parliament to write to the head of a state, a man moreover, no matter what some hon. members may think of him, who is a world figure today. I would not have been surprised, nor would I have blamed President Nasser, if he had ignored my letter. To my surprise, in about a month or six weeks I received a letter from President Nasser. It was a very simple letter written from one man to another with no suggestion of condescension or pretentiousness, in which he thanked me for having written so frankly to him.

• (4:10 p.m.)

Then he proceeded to discuss the problems that lay in the way of a Middle Eastern